(b) whether it is a fact that PMO has also forwarded the same for investigation / inquiry to the Director of vigilance of the Ministry; if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the findings of the inquiry?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A complaint was received against certain Indian Forest Service Officers of Sikkim cadre, which was subsequently forwarded to the State Government for investigation / report. After inquiry, Government of Sikkim informed that these officers do not possess assets dis-proportionate to known sources of their income and Government of Sikkim closed the case.

Population of Tigers and Leopard

1359. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the population of tigers and leopards in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that their population is decreasing day by day;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what steps are being taken to protect and maintain their population in the country?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The estimated numbers of tigers and leopards in the country are at Statement I and II respectivley (*See* below).

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Following steps has been taken to protect the population of tigers and leopards:

(i) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals including tigers against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act. 1972.

(ii) Financial and technical help is being extended to the States under Centrally Sponsored Schemes for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure to provide effective protection to wild animals.

(iii) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

(iv) Ministry of Home Affairs has written to all State Governments to lend a helping hand to the field formations to curb poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(v) A Special Coordination and Enforcement Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of Secretary (Environment and Forests), Government of India for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(vi) In the recent meeting of Indian Board on Wildlife, it was resolved to declare the wildlife and forest as a priority sector and fill up all the vacant posts of the frontline staff immediately and also to provide basic infrastructure necessary for efficient discharge of duties by them.

Statement-I

Population of Tigers in the country as reported by the States

Sl.No.	Name of the State	1993	1997
1.	Tamil Nadu	97	62
2.	Maharashtra	276	257
3.	West Bengal	335	361
4.	Karnataka	305	350
5.	Bihar	137	103
6.	Assam	325	458
7.	Rajasthan	64	58
8.	Madhya Pradesh	912	927
9.	Uttar Pradesh	465	475
10.	Andhra Pradesh	197	171

Sl.No.	Name of the State	1993	1997
11.	Mizoram	28	12
12.	Gujarat	5	1
13.	Goa Daman & Diu	3	6
14.	Orissa	226	194
15.	Kerala	57	73
	TOTAL	**3432**	**3508**
16.	Meghalaya	53	*
17.	Manipur	—	*
18.	Tripura	—	*
19.	Nagaland	83	*
20.	Arunachal Pradesh	180	*
21.	Sikkim	2	*
22.	Haryana	—	N.R.
	TOTAL	**318**	—

N.R.—Not reported by States

*—Tiger census was not carried out in North East States in 1997.

Statement-II

Population of Leopards in the country as reported by the States

S.No.	Name of the State	1993	1997
1.	Andhra Pradesh	152	138
2.	Goa / Daman & Diu	31	25
3.	Gujarat	772	832
4.	Karnataka	455	620
5.	Kerala	16	16
6.	M.P. / Chattisgarh	1700	1851
7.	Maharashtra	417	431
8.	Mizoram	49	28
9.	Orissa	378	422

S.No.	Name of the State	1993	1997
10.	Rajasthan	475	474
11.	Tamil Nadu	138	110
12.	UP/Uttaranchal	711*	1412
13.	Bihar/Jharkhand	203	260
14.	Haryana	25	30
15.	Himachal Pradesh	821	972
16.	West Bengal	108	166
	TOTAL	6451	7787
17.	Arunachal Pradesh	98	**
18.	Assam	246	**
19.	Tripura	18	**
20.	Dadar Nagar Haveli	15	NR
	TOTAL	6828	

N.R.—Not reported by States

*Estimation was not conducted in the high mountain regions of the State

**Estimation was not conducted in North-eastern State

Fine on the Ministry of Environment and Forests

1360. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests has been fined twice by the Supreme Court of India recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof, together with the reasons for imposition of fines by Supreme Court; and

(c) the reasons for not taking timely and properly action by the Ministry?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) In Writ Petition No. 657/ 1995 as per the Supreme Court's orders, the Ministry was required to (i) submit a report on the waste oil consignments seized at Jawahar Lal Nehru Port, Nhava Sheva, Mumbai,